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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/789,230	02/27/2004	Timothy M. Cahill	36352US1	7984
116	7590	08/31/2004	EXAMINER	
PEARNE & GORDON LLP 1801 EAST 9TH STREET SUITE 1200 CLEVELAND, OH 44114-3108			CHAMBERS, MICHAEL S	
			ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
			3711	

DATE MAILED: 08/31/2004

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary	Application No.	Applicant(s)
	10/789,230	CAHILL, TIMOTHY M.
Examiner	Art Unit	
Mike Chambers	3711	

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) Responsive to communication(s) filed on 27 February 2004.
- 2a) This action is FINAL. 2b) This action is non-final.
- 3) Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) Claim(s) 1-20 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) Claim(s) 1-20 is/are rejected.
- 7) Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) accepted or b) objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) All b) Some * c) None of:
 1. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 2. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 3. Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

1) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)	4) <input type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413)
2) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)	Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____.
3) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08) Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____:	5) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
	6) <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____.

DETAILED ACTION

Claim Objections

Claim 1 is objected to because of the following informalities:

In line 5: "rim diameter" should be --cross sectional rim diameter --.

It is unclear whether the length of the flange is greater than the cross-sectional area of the rim material or the diameter of the basketball hoop.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(b) the invention was patented or described in a printed publication in this or a foreign country or in public use or on sale in this country, more than one year prior to the date of application for patent in the United States.

Claims 1, 2 and 17-19 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Ryan. Ryan discloses an annular shaped member (fig 2,7 item 9) having a first side and a second side, the annular shaped member having a diameter larger than a rim diameter of a basketball hoop; and a flange (item 14, fig 7) that encircles a portion of an outer edge of the annular shaped member and projects downwardly from the second side by a length greater than the rim diameter, wherein the first side of the annular shaped member is substantially smooth and flat and wherein the annular shaped member can block a basketball from passing through the basketball hoop (fig 1). In as much structure set forth, the apparatus is capable of use as claimed (MPEP 2112).

As to claim 2 : Ryan discloses an integrally formed flange (fig 6, item 14, 2:46-48).

As to claims 17-19 : See claim 1 rejection.

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Also,

Claims 1, 3-11 and 17-19 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Dunagan et al. Dunagan et al discloses an annular shaped member (10) having a first side and a second side, the annular shaped member having a diameter larger than a rim diameter of a basketball hoop; and a flange (item 18) that encircles a portion of an outer edge of the annular shaped member and projects downwardly from the second side by a length greater than the rim diameter, wherein the first side of the annular shaped member is substantially smooth and flat and wherein the annular shaped member can block a basketball from passing through the basketball hoop (fig 2). In as much structure set forth, the apparatus is capable of use as claimed (MPEP 2112).

As to claims 3 and 4 : Dunagan et al discloses an arm and arm receiving structure (fig 3, item 24,34).

As to claim 5 : Dunagan et al discloses a threaded portion (24).

As to claim 6 : Dunagan et al discloses a notch (fig 2). In as much structure set forth by the applicant in the claim, the notch between the flanges (16,18) meets the limitations of the claim.

As to claim 7 : Dunagan et al discloses a plurality of protrusions (fig 2, item 24).

As to claim 8 : Dunagan et al discloses a plurality of cylindrical protrusions (fig 2, item 24).

As to claim 9 : Dunagan et al discloses protrusions that are concentric with the flange (fig 2, 3).

As to claim 10 : Dunagan et al discloses a distance greater than the rim diameter (fig 2, 3).

As to claim 11 : Dunagan et al discloses a flange and protrusion to receive a rim (fig 3).

As to claims 17-19 : See claim 1 rejection.

Also,

Claims 1, 3,4, 6,7, 9-11 13,14,16 and 17-20 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Booker et al. Booker et al discloses an annular shaped member (12) having a first side and a second side, the annular shaped member having a diameter larger than a rim diameter of a basketball hoop; and a flange (item 22) that encircles a portion of an outer edge of the annular shaped member and projects downwardly from the second side by a length greater than the rim diameter, wherein the first side of the annular shaped member is substantially smooth and flat and wherein the annular shaped member can block a basketball from passing through the basketball hoop (fig 2).

As to claims 3 and 4 : Booker et al discloses an arm and arm receiving structure (fig 1, item 30).

As to claim 6 : Booker et al discloses a notch (fig 2). In as much structure set forth by the applicant in the claim, the notch between the flanges that receive the rim (support structure) meets the limitations of the claim.

As to claim 7 : Booker et al discloses a plurality of protrusions (fig 2).

As to claim 9 : Booker et al discloses protrusions that are concentric with the flange (fig 2, 3).

As to claim 10 : Booker et al discloses a distance greater than the rim diameter (fig 2, 3).

As to claim 11 : Booker et al discloses a flange and protrusion to receive a rim (fig 3).

As to claim 13 : Booker et al discloses a rod (fig 1, item 32).

As to claim 14 : Booker et al discloses a rod receiving structure (fig 1, item 32).

As to claim 16 : Booker et al discloses a flange and plurality of protrusions (fig 2).

As to claims 17-19 : See claim 1 rejection.

As to claim 20: See claim 1 rejection. The method claimed would naturally be used by one using the device.

Also,

Claims 17-20 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Stovall.

Stovall discloses means for creating a shelf-like image (fig 4).

As to claim 18 : Stovall discloses means for covering a rim (fig 1-4).

As to claim 19 : Stovall discloses means for preventing a basketball from passing through a basketball goal (fig 1-4).

As to claim 20: See claim 17 rejection. The method claimed would naturally be used by one using the device.

Also,

Claims 17-20 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Carroll.

Carroll discloses means for creating a shelf-like image (fig 2).

As to claim 18 : Carroll discloses means for covering a rim (fig 2).

As to claim 19 : Carroll discloses means for preventing a basketball from passing through a basketball goal (fig 2).

As to claim 20: See claim 17 rejection. The method claimed would naturally be used by one using the device.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

Claim 2 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Booker et al in view of Official Notice. Booker et al discloses the elements of claim 2, however it fails to clearly disclose the use of a unitary structure. Official Notice is taken that the use of unitary structures is well known in the art of goals. It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention to have employed a unitary structure in order to lower manufacturing costs. (See Davies et al 5816948 2:43-49)

Claim 5 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Booker et al in view of Official Notice. Booker et al discloses the elements of claim 5, however it fails to clearly disclose the use of a threaded rod. Official Notice is taken that the use of various equivalent fastening means is well known in the art. It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention to have employed any one of several equivalent fastening means based on unitary structure in order to lower manufacturing costs. (See Davies et al 5816948 2:43-49)

Claim 12 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Booker et al in view of Official Notice. Booker et al discloses the elements of claim 12, however it fails to clearly disclose the use of a high-impact polymer composite. Official Notice is taken that the use of high-impact polymer composite is well known in the art of goals. It

would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention to have employed a unitary structure in order to decrease the weight of the device and lower manufacturing costs. (See Davies et al 5816948 2:43-49)

Claims 13-14 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Davies et al in view of Rapp. Davies et al discloses the elements of claim 13, however it fails to disclose the use of a rod to engage the annular member. Rapp discloses the use of a rod to engage the annular member (fig 2, item 36,37). It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention to have employed the rod of Rapp with the device in order to easily attach and remove the device from a basketball rim.

As to claim 14: Rapp discloses a rod receiving structure (fig 2, item 36,37). It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention to have employed the rod of Rapp with the device in order to easily attach and remove the device from a basketball rim.

Claim 15 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Davies et al in view of Rapp and further in view of Mattoon. The cited art fails to disclose a sectioned rod. Mattoon discloses a sectioned rod (28, 27). It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention to have employed the sectioned rod of Mattoon with the device in order to easily store the device when not in use.

Conclusion

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Mike Chambers whose telephone number is 703-306-5516. The examiner can normally be reached on Mon-Fri 8:30-5:00.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Greg Vidovich can be reached on 703-308-1513. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 703-872-9306.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).

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August 27, 2004



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